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# Translanguaging Collections: Affirming Bilingual and Multilingual Learners

Six culturally and linguistically sustaining  
text collections and classroom resources

Developed by

Carla España, Ph.D. and Luz Yadira Herrera, Ph.D.

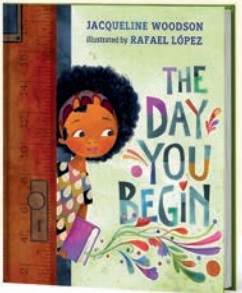


Identity • Place and Change • Intergenerational Connections • Migration and Immigration  
Community and Connections that Sustain Me • Changemakers

“There will be times when no one understands the way words curl from your mouth, the beautiful language of the country you left behind. My name is Rigoberto. We just moved here from Venezuela.

And because they don’t understand, the classroom will fill with laughter until the teacher quiets everyone.” (p.6)

—from *The Day You Begin* by **Jacqueline Woodson**



At **Penguin Random House Education** we believe that all students’ experiences, cultures, and languages must be valued and honored. We are dedicated to creating classroom and school environments that celebrate students’ unique and diverse backgrounds. We acknowledge that these attributes and harnessing students’ strengths lead to understanding, celebration, community, and active engagement in learning.

**Translanguaging invites students to use their own experiences and languages to make connections and deepen their engagement with texts and people in their lives.**

Translanguaging is a communicative practice of bilinguals and multilinguals, that is, it is a practice where bilinguals and multilinguals use their entire linguistic repertoire to communicate and make meaning (García, 2009; García, Ibarra Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017).

As teacher educators and bilingual readers themselves, Carla and Luz see translanguaging pedagogy as a way to reimagine how we use language in our classrooms, creating space for transformative teaching that centers the ways bilingual and multilingual children navigate the world, and making this a reality in the classroom.

\*García, O. (2009). *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*. Wiley-Blackwell.  
García, O., Ibarra Johnson, S., & Seltzer, K. (2017). *The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning*. Caslon.



**Dr. Carla España, Ph.D.** is a New York-based educator from Chile. She is a researcher, writer, and co-founder of the *En Comunidad Collective*.

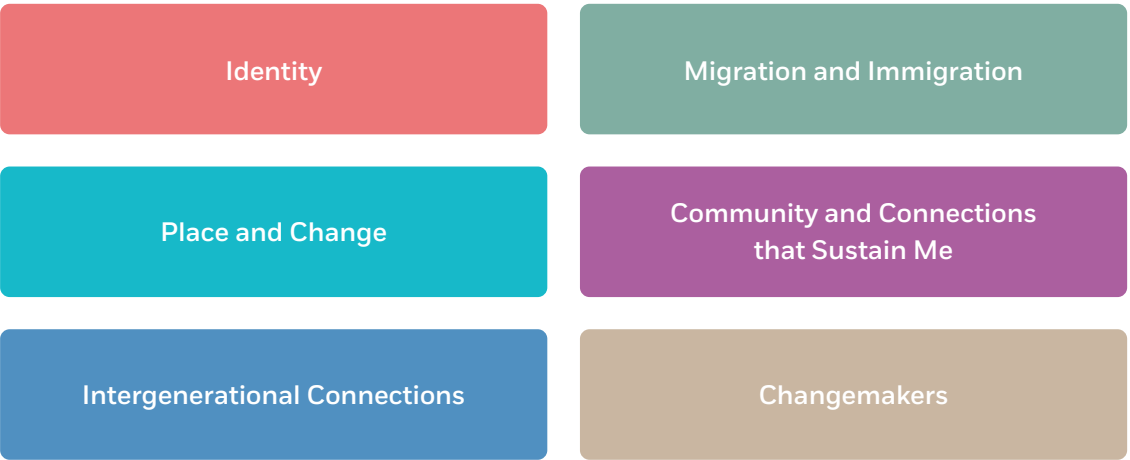
**Dr. Luz Yadira Herrera, Ph.D.** is a teacher, researcher, author, and co-founder of the *En Comunidad Collective*. She is an assistant professor of bilingual education at California State University, Channel Islands.



Visit **PRHTLC.com** for a full list of resources, including links to media and sample lessons.

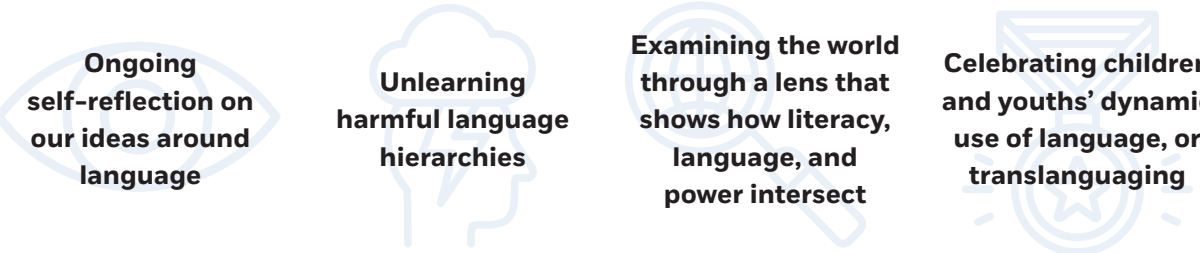
It is through the lens of culturally and linguistically sustaining texts that we created the **PRH Education Translanguaging Collections**. We developed these collections to ensure that bilingual and multilingual children and youths have every opportunity to feel affirmed and reflected in the stories they read, as well as learn about each other and the rest of the world to build understanding and connection with one another.

**PRH Education Translanguaging Collections** are curated into one of six culturally and linguistically sustaining topics that take into consideration the varied lives and experiences of bilingual and multilingual students:



We acknowledge the complexities of these topics and how one text, one author, or one professional development session cannot encompass the entirety of a group’s experience. We hope that the curated texts in each collection—along with the Reading-in-Community guides for the anchor texts—can support educators in deepening their understanding of these topics and engage colleagues and students. The collections consist of picture books, early readers, middle-grade, and young adult (YA) novels that center stories from underrepresented communities, providing educators with the opportunities to engage in a deep study of each topic across different types of books.

Each of the six collections are framed through a Critical Bilingual Literacies approach (España & Herrera, 2020) that consists of four guiding principles:

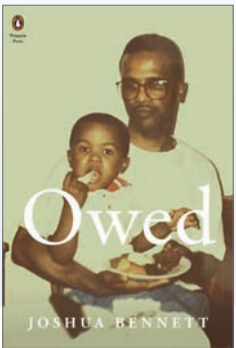
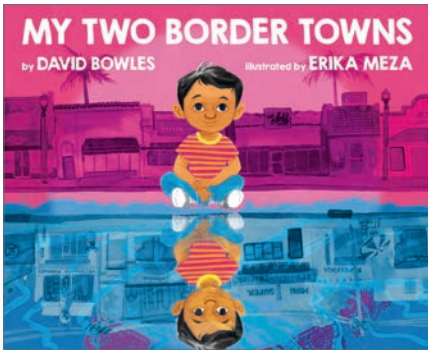


\*España, C., & Herrera, L. Y. (2020). *En comunidad: Lessons for Centering the Voices and Experiences of Bilingual Latinx Students*. Heinemann.

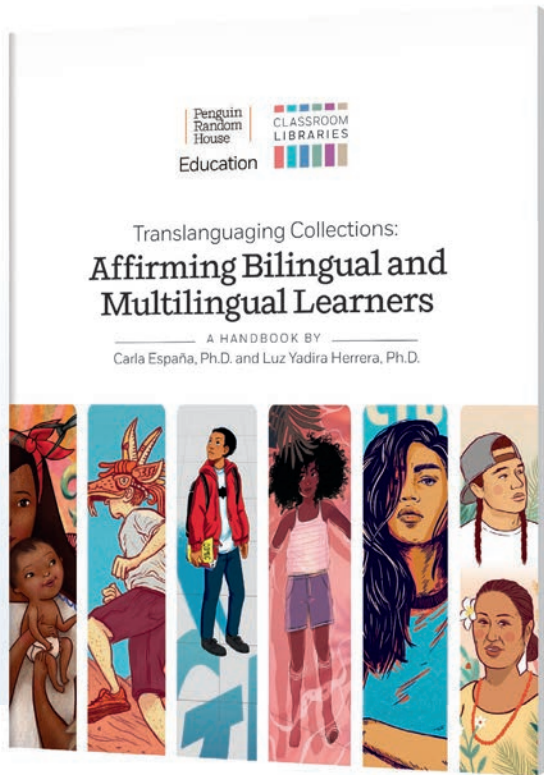
Translanguaging Collections Components

Each of the six collections includes:

- Fifteen unique titles across:
  - Picture Books
  - Early Chapter
  - Middle-Grade
  - Young Adult
- Educator Handbook
- Booklist specific to that collection



Anchor Texts for  
Community and  
Connections that  
Sustain Me



PRH Education Translanguaging Collections includes a comprehensive Educator Handbook. Using research-based practices and classroom and teacher education experiences, the Handbook provides educators with practical ways to help students make meaningful connections to authentic texts with:

- a planning guide that provides an overview on the topic and how the texts support the learning of those topics.
- a Reading-in-Community plan for four anchor texts with guiding questions, multiple opportunities for children and youth interaction, reading strategies, and author’s craft analysis.
- a language study for each anchor text that supports discussion on the ways authors translanguaje in their writing or reflect on language practices, and how to apply it to students’ writing.
- discussion questions that can be used in professional learning communities, book clubs, whole-school inquiry studies, and in the classroom.

Examples of how we’ll connect you and your students to the authentic texts:

Ways to invite the author and illustrator to be a part of the learning community

Preparation for book reading that contextualizes the work in a literacy unit

Strategic excerpts to read and discuss with students

Reading-in-Community for Community and Connections that Sustain Me #1

READING-IN-COMMUNITY PLAN: *My Two Border Towns* by David Bowles, illustrated by Erika Meza

**Set up and Introduce**

The following are ways to introduce the book by focusing on an **author study**, **illustrator study**, **topic study**, **connection with a literacy unit**, and/or **book cover observations**.

- **Author Study:** Tell students that they will meet David Bowles by reading his brief biography written on the book’s back flap.
- **Illustrator Study:** Show the “Books” page from Erika Meza’s [website](#) and read the short bio on her life as a migrant. Ask students about their observations of the book covers on the site.
- **Topic Study:** Share on community, having to navigate two homes/places, honoring the community, and keeping connections alive.
- **Connection with a Literacy Unit:** This book can be read during a character study unit, realistic fiction genre study, or a narrative writing unit. It is also a great addition to text sets on immigration and life on the border between the United States and Mexico.
- **Book Cover Observations:** Show the book cover and ask students to share what they notice:
  - What do you notice on the cover? What meaning do you think this has to a story titled *My Two Border Towns*?

**Reading-in-Community**

Before you begin planning the ways you will engage students with this book reading-in-community, we recommend you read the [teaching guide](#) for *My Two Border Towns* by Lorena Germán. Below you will find key lines that you can read with students, along with some guiding questions.

- “Every other Saturday, my dad wakes me up early. ‘Come on, m’ijo,’ he says, ‘Vamos al Otro Lado.’”

Share with students the ways you make sense of the illustrations and the words in this scene. Who is getting ready to go? Who is missing from this outing? Where is this taking place? Why might this outing exclude some people?

“I grab my special bag, hold it tight as I follow Dad, thinking of what’s inside for my friends” (p. 1).

It is now the students’ turn to make observations of what they see in the illustrations and the narrative. Have students discuss their ideas on what might be so special about that bag. What would they take on a trip? Why?

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“Dad reminds me: Coahuiltecs once lived here, before all this was Mexico—both riverbanks” (p. 5).

Pause at this moment to show students a map of the US and Mexico. Then, point to the border region of South Texas and tell students that Coahuiltecs once lived there—they were the native people of that land.

“We drive up the narrow main street till Don Chava flags us down and helps us park. He and my dad shake hands. ‘Le cuida la troca,’ he says with a smile. ‘You and your boy have fun’” (p. 9).

What is Don Chava’s job? Why might this job be important? Who are the people in your community that have jobs that help others?

How does Erika Meza use the illustrations to show us this community? Ask students what they notice about this place.

**Have reading partnerships read the following:**

“This town’s a twin of the one where I live, with Spanish spoken everywhere just the same, but English mostly missing till it pops up like grains of sugar on a chili pepper” (p. 10).

- Ask students to discuss what image comes to mind with this part. Then, ask students what this line means.

**Read in Community:**

“We have breakfast in our favorite restorán...” (p. 11).

- Ask students to describe what they notice in this scene. Ask students about the special foods that they share with their loved ones.

“The most important visit, Dad says. We have a duty to care for our gente” (p. 21).

- What do you think the narrator means by that? What are some ways that people in your community take care of each other?

Read the scene that begins with the following: “A line of people camp along the edge, entire families from the Caribbean and Central America” (p. 25).

- Ask students what they notice about this scene. How are the father and the son helping narrator notices that Élder’s hair is longer now (compared to as this clue tell you about Élder and his family? Ask students about Élder’s family and other families that are camped out...” (p. 27).

...say about the connection between Élder and the protagonist...y across. We take out our passports—cards that give us the 29).

What do you think about this “freedom to travel back and

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Intentional discussion prompts connected to the translanguaging collection topic

“All the way home I imagine...” (p. 31).

Ask students about the world that the child imagines. Ask them to give you examples. Ask students to imagine a wonderful day. What does it look like? How can we get closer to the wonderful time that they imagine?

**Discussion and Response**

- **Focus on topic:** What do we learn about community and how it sustains us? What do we learn about border life and identity?
- **Focus on relationship (father and son):** What are some moments the father and son experience together? What are some things that you like to do with special people in your life? What else would you like to experience?
- **Focus on characters’ actions:** The protagonist says that Mamá gives them a kiss and a list. What are some reasons the mother might stay and not accompany them on their trip?
- **Focus on illustrations:** How do the illustrations help us understand the story better?
- **Focus on language:** How does the author use language fluidly in telling the story? How does it help us better understand the characters and the story?

**Language Study**

Book Excerpts	Observations of Language Use	How Can I Try This as a Writer?
“Every other Saturday, my dad wakes me up early. ‘Come on, m’ijo,’ he says. ‘Vamos al Otro Lado.’” (p. 1)	The author includes names for places in Spanish and shows cultural nuances by unofficially naming places.	I can authentically represent people and places in my writing by using all of my languages.
“We have breakfast in our favorite restorán...” (p. 11)	The author uses features from Spanish in his description of what the protagonist and his father do during their visit across the border.	I can use words for special places or food in different languages to accurately develop my story or that of the characters I am writing.
“Asere!” (p. 27) “¡Mi cuatel!” (p. 27)	The author uses words that depict different varieties of Spanish, in this case, a greeting between two friends.	I can consider the language varieties that I know and weave them into my story when it makes sense for me to use certain words.

\* Visit PRHTLC.com for a full list of resources, including media sources and alternate book lists.

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Options to delve deeply with lenses for multiple reads and discussion questions

Language study crafted to facilitate conversations on language practices

Ways students can grow their writer identity by examining author’s craft

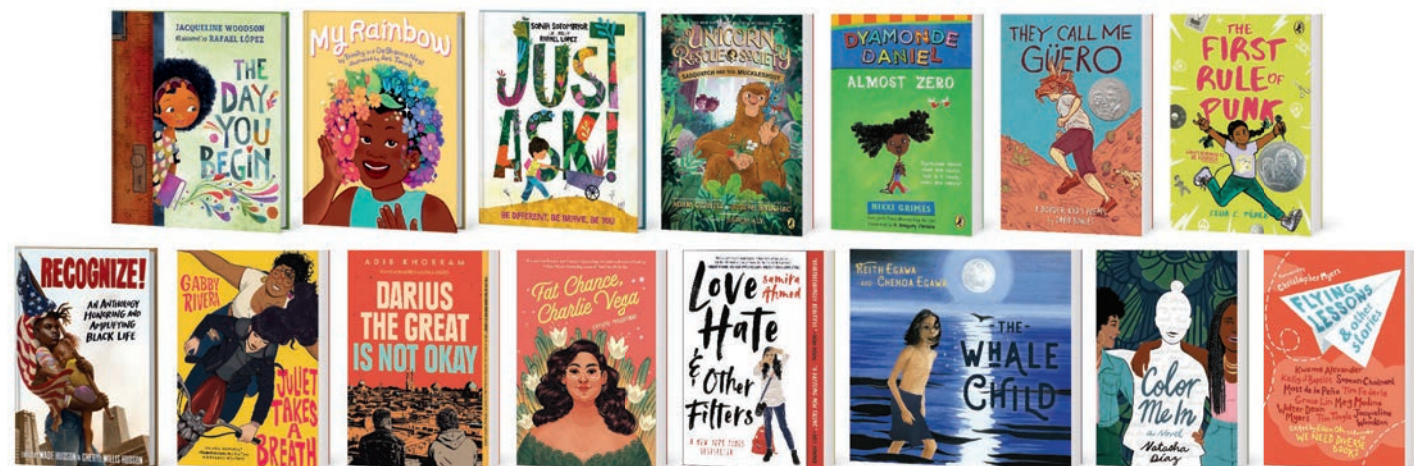


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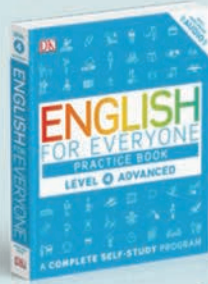
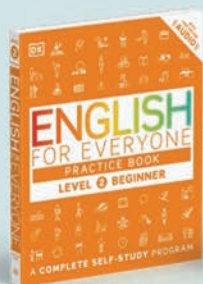
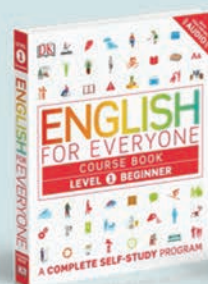
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